

Introduced by Senator Scott

(Principal coauthor: Assembly Member Liu)

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McLeod)February 24, 2006

An act to add Chapter 3.3 (commencing with Section 66130) to Part 40 of the Education Code, relating to postsecondary education.

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

SB 1709, as introduced, Scott. Postsecondary education: College Opportunity Act of 2006.

Existing law establishes the system of postsecondary education in this state, which consists of the California Community Colleges, the California State University, the University of California, and independent institutions of higher education.

This bill would enact the College Opportunity Act of 2006. The bill would express various findings and declarations of the Legislature, and statements of legislative intent, with respect to the need to plan for, and fund, growth in the various segments of postsecondary education in the state between the operative date of the act and 2015.

The bill would require the Governor to convene and chair a State of College Opportunity Meeting on a biennial basis on or before March 1, 2007, and on or before March 1 of every odd-numbered year thereafter until, and including, 2015. The bill would specify that the purpose of these meetings would be to assess the state's progress toward achieving its higher education goals. The bill would provide that the attendees of these meetings would include, but not necessarily be limited to, the executive and trustee leadership of California's public higher education segments, the Student Aid Commission,

legislative leaders, representatives of the Legislative Analyst's Office and the California Postsecondary Education Commission, and at least 15 representatives from the labor, business, civic, religious, health care, scientific, and other communities.

The bill would require the State Department of Education to send a letter, by regular post office delivery, to the residence of each pupil in grades 6, 8, and 10, at the beginning of the school year, notifying that pupil and his or her family, that the state encourages these pupils to attend an institution of higher education in California and that the state will provide a place in a community college or university for all eligible students, as well as make available to them all applicable information related to postsecondary options and the range of financial aid programs available to all students.

The bill would require the State Department of Education to make available a toll-free telephone number and Web site to students and parents that shall contain more detailed information that will also serve as a platform for teachers and educators.

The bill would require that, commencing with the 2007–08 academic year and each year thereafter, in order to improve coordination between secondary schools and the California Community Colleges, the Chancellor of the California Community Colleges develop a method of providing statewide information to Grade 11 pupils using the Grade 11 standards test so that pupils will know what they need to work on in Grade 12 in order to be able to perform college-level work.

The bill would require the Board of Governors of the California Community Colleges and the Trustees of the California State University, and request the Regents of the University of California and the Association of Independent California Colleges and Universities, in coordination with the Legislative Analyst's Office, to develop a joint 10-year enrollment growth plan meeting statewide goals for participation and completion. The bill would require the California Postsecondary Education Commission to work in coordination with each of the segments of postsecondary education, the Legislative Analyst's Office, the Department of Finance, and other entities that it deems appropriate, on this enrollment growth plan, as specified.

The bill would require the board of governors and the trustees, and request the regents and the association, to each develop a plan for improved completion rates in their respective segments, and to each

make an annual report on critical indicators of success in meeting the goals of the enrollment plan developed pursuant to the bill and on methods of maintaining and achieving progress in meeting statewide goals for access and success with the efficient use of resources.

The bill would require the trustees, and request the regents, to report data to the Legislature and the Governor based on freshman enrollment, transfer admissions, completion rates, units to degree, and other efficiency indicators.

Vote: majority. Appropriation: no. Fiscal committee: yes.
State-mandated local program: no.

The people of the State of California do enact as follows:

SECTION 1. Chapter 3.3 (commencing with Section 66130) is added to Part 40 of the Education Code, to read:

CHAPTER 3.3. COLLEGE OPPORTUNITY ACT OF 2006

Article 1. General Provisions

66130. (a) This act shall be known, and may be cited, as the College Opportunity Act of 2006.

(b) In enacting the College Opportunity Act of 2006, it is the intent of the Legislature to renew its commitment to the promise made in the 1960 Master Plan for Higher Education. The central goal of this act is for a greater number of young Californians to pursue and complete a college education.

66130.3. (a) The Legislature finds and declares all of the following:

(1) A population explosion among Californians of college-going age (between 18 and 24 years of age) in the next decade will push this age group to a projected 4,260,000 in 2015, an increase of 27 percent from 2000 to 2015.

(2) California is in prime position to invest now in higher education to secure the state's economic future.

(3) If we fail to invest, the state is likely to face a host of social and economic difficulties associated with a population boom of young people ill-prepared for the demands of the 21st century economy.

(4) A 2005 study by the University of California, Berkeley entitled, “Return on Investment: Education Choices and Demographic Change in California’s Future,” quantifies the potential benefits of state investment in higher education, as well as the costs of failing to invest. This study has found that the gains are substantial: for every new dollar California invests to get more students in and through college above current levels, it will receive a net return on its investment of three dollars.

(5) Given historic trends in college participation and the lack of state funding to meet current student enrollment demands, it is likely that approximately 1,800,000 students will be turned away from our public community colleges and universities between 2004 and 2013.

(b) Therefore, it is the intent of the Legislature to accomplish all of the following:

(1) Increase the number of new college graduates with certificates or AA, BA, or graduate degrees by at least 1,800,000 over current college completion levels to ensure that the growing generation of young Californians is prepared to meet the growing workforce needs of the state.

(2) Improve the quality of life and keep the promise of college opportunity for its growing and changing population.

(3) Create an affirmative policy with goals for college participation and completion, and measure the state’s progress towards achieving those goals, including efforts by our community colleges, public universities, and independent colleges towards achieving those goals.

(4) Increase the college participation and completion rates for all students, especially for all ethnic minority groups in the state.

(5) Require the Governor to convene and chair a State of College Opportunity Meeting on a biennial basis on or before March 1, 2007, and on or before March 1 of each odd-numbered year thereafter until, and including, 2015.

(6) Launch an aggressive program of outreach and academic preparation and awareness of postsecondary options and financial aid among middle and high school students, their families, and in the adult populations.

Article 2. Policies to Encourage Higher Participation Rates

66131. The Governor shall convene and chair a State of College Opportunity Meeting on a biennial basis on or before March 1, 2007, and on or before March 1 of every odd-numbered year thereafter until, and including, 2015. This meeting shall assess the state's progress toward achieving its higher education goals.

(a) Attendees at the biennial meeting shall include, but not necessarily be limited to, the executive and trustee leadership of California's public higher education segments, the members of the Student Aid Commission, legislative leaders, representatives of the Legislative Analyst's Office and the California Postsecondary Education Commission, and at least 15 representatives from the labor, business, civic, religious, health care, scientific, and other communities.

(b) The biennial meeting shall result in a report including, but not necessarily limited to, discussions of all of the following:

(1) Progress toward meeting state goals in terms of access and success.

(2) The adequacy of state funding in relation to the financing plan.

(3) Improvements in efficiency and joint use of resources, including early assessment and improved academic preparation of elementary and secondary students, efficient transfer paths, and joint use of facilities.

(4) The total effect of higher education in meeting the needs of the workforce and the civic life of the state, with attention on specific industries and employment areas, such as mathematics, science and technology, health care, and public service.

(c) The state shall contract with a nationally recognized expert to provide an assessment of state performance and policy recommendations in addition to those assessments provided by state agencies and the segments of postsecondary education in the report required by subdivision (b).

66131.3. (a) The State Department of Education shall send a letter, by regular post office delivery, to the residence of each pupil in grades 6, 8, and 10, at the beginning of the school year, notifying that pupil and his or her family, of both of the following:

1 (1) That the state encourages these pupils to attend an
2 institution of higher education in California.

3 (2) That the state will provide a place in a community college
4 or university for all eligible students, as well as make available to
5 them all applicable information related to postsecondary options
6 and the range of financial aid programs available to all students.

7 (b) The notification letters sent pursuant to subdivision (a)
8 shall be made available in languages other than English for
9 students and their families if the number of students in that
10 school who speak a foreign language make up at least 15 percent
11 of the total school population.

12 (c) The State Department of Education shall make available a
13 toll-free telephone number and Web site to students and parents
14 that shall contain more detailed information that will also serve
15 as a platform for teachers and educators. This accessibility shall
16 readily connect the issue to the families of future students.

17 66131.5. Commencing in the 2007–08 academic year and
18 each year thereafter, in order to improve coordination between
19 secondary schools and the California Community Colleges, the
20 Chancellor of the California Community Colleges shall develop
21 a method of providing statewide information to Grade 11 pupils
22 using the Grade 11 standards test so that pupils will know what
23 they need to work on in Grade 12 in order to be able to perform
24 college-level work.

25 66131.7. (a) In coordination with the Legislative Analyst's
26 Office, the Board of Governors of the California Community
27 Colleges and the Trustees of the California State University shall,
28 and the Regents of the University of California and the
29 Association of Independent California Colleges and Universities
30 are requested to, develop a joint 10-year enrollment growth plan
31 meeting statewide goals for participation and completion. This
32 enrollment growth plan shall include, but not necessarily be
33 limited to, all of the following:

34 (1) Setting, as a goal, the addition of 1,800,000 students, who
35 will graduate with degrees and certificates from California
36 postsecondary education institutions.

37 (2) Making a commitment to at least a 3 percent annual
38 growth rate of higher education opportunities in the state, and
39 setting segment-by-segment goals for an improved rate of
40 completion of degrees.

1 (3) Setting goals for the number of certificates, associate
2 degrees, bachelor's degrees, and graduate degrees to be awarded,
3 as well as setting goals for overall college participation.

4 (b) Prior to the start of each biennial meeting convened
5 pursuant to Section 66131, the Governor may modify the
6 numerical targets and goals set in the enrollment plan developed
7 pursuant to subdivision (a), as these targets and goals relate to the
8 number of new college graduates needed in order to ensure that
9 the growing generation of young Californians is prepared to meet
10 the growing workforce needs of the state.

11 66132. It is the intent of the Legislature to enact legislation to
12 accomplish all of the following:

13 (a) To fund enrollment growth of the University of California
14 at a rate of at least 2.5 percent up to and including the 2014–15
15 fiscal year.

16 (b) To fund enrollment growth of the California State
17 University at a rate of at least 2.5 percent up to and including the
18 2014–15 fiscal year.

19 (c) To fund enrollment growth of the California Community
20 Colleges at a rate of at least 3 percent up to and including the
21 2014–15 fiscal year.

22 (d) To fund growth in financial aid funding to cover the
23 student population and its changing needs, including the needs of
24 students attending independent colleges and universities.

25 66132.3. (a) The Board of Governors of the California
26 Community Colleges and the Trustees of the California State
27 University shall, and the Regents of the University of California
28 and the Association of Independent California Colleges and
29 Universities are requested to, each develop a plan for improved
30 completion rates in their respective segments. The board of
31 governors and the trustees shall, and the regents are requested to,
32 work on plans to improve transfer pathways for community
33 college students.

34 (b) The California Postsecondary Education Commission shall
35 work in coordination with each of the segments of postsecondary
36 education, the Legislative Analyst's Office, the Department of
37 Finance, and other entities that it deems appropriate, on the
38 enrollment plan developed pursuant to Section 66131.7 to
39 provide further detail relating to numerical targets and goals,
40 anticipated gains in college going rates, effects within specified

1 geographic regions of the state, employment needs in the
2 statewide economy, and other issues that the commission deems
3 pertinent. The commission shall compile and report all pertinent
4 data by February 1 of each year so that the segments of
5 postsecondary education are able to utilize this data in their
6 reports and plans.

7 66132.5. (a) The Board of Governors of the California
8 Community Colleges and the Trustees of the California State
9 University shall, and the Regents of the University of California
10 and the Association of Independent California Colleges and
11 Universities are requested to, each report annually on all of the
12 following:

13 (1) Critical indicators of success in meeting the goals of the
14 enrollment plan developed pursuant to Section 66131.7.

15 (2) Methods of maintaining and achieving progress in meeting
16 statewide goals for access and success with the efficient use of
17 resources.

18 (b) The Trustees of the California State University shall, and
19 the Regents of the University of California are requested to,
20 report data to the Legislature and the Governor based on
21 freshman enrollment, transfer admissions, completion rates, units
22 to degree, and other efficiency indicators.

23 66132.7. (a) The Legislature finds and declares that it is the
24 responsibility of the leaders of higher education to work together
25 to set indicators and measurable targets on indicators of access
26 and success and the efficient use of resources.

27 (b) It is the intent of the Legislature that both of the following
28 shall occur:

29 (1) A 10 percent reduction in the cost per graduate,
30 attributable to improved completion rates and other efficiencies,
31 as well as to growth and economies of scale normally factored in
32 the marginal cost formula.

33 (2) That the state, in cooperation with community colleges,
34 and all public and private universities, shall set priorities for
35 enrollment criteria based on students' needs and academic
36 standing. In setting these priorities, the state shall consider the
37 following as relevant criteria in considering student enrollment:

38 (A) Transfer status, with specified uniform transfer
39 requirements between all community colleges and all public and
40 private universities.

1 (B) Community college and high school coordination and
2 transition, including concurrent enrollment status, including
3 general and vocational education.

4 (C) Coordination with the Department of Industrial Relations
5 in meeting state workforce needs by occupation and industry.

6 66133. (a) The Legislature finds and declares that, through
7 2015, significant gains in population, expected gains in high
8 school graduation, desired gains in college-going, and expected
9 workforce needs must be considered and examined on a regular
10 basis.

11 (b) It is the intent of the Legislature to accomplish all of the
12 following:

13 (1) To fund the 10-year enrollment growth plan for college
14 access and success using General Fund and other revenues. This
15 plan shall not be binding, but shall be used as a guideline for the
16 budget planning of the Legislative Analyst's Office (LAO) and
17 the Department of Finance (DOF). This plan shall direct the LAO
18 and the DOF to work with the segments of postsecondary
19 education, the California Postsecondary Education Commission
20 (CPEC), and the Student Aid Commission for the 10-year
21 financing plan for California higher education.

22 (2) To fund higher education to meet the goals of access,
23 completion, quality, and affordability, as well as cost of living
24 adjustments and other similar factors, through gradual increases
25 in state aid.

26 (3) To require the LAO and the DOF to work with the
27 segments of postsecondary education and CPEC to deliver a
28 financing plan for higher education through the year 2015.